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ABSTRACT

Questionnaires were sent to the 1972 graduates of the University of Wisconsin School of Education as part of a follow-up study to determine what teaching competencies the respondents felt they needed in the performance of their job and which of these topics or competencies were not adequately covered in their preservice preparation. The 44 items on the questionnaire were grouped into four categories by the respondents: (a) necessary for teachers and adequately taught in preparation program, (b) necessary for teachers but not adequately taught in preparation program, (c) not necessary for teachers but covered in preservice program, and (d) not necessary for teachers and not covered in preservice program. Eight items which fell into category "b" are: (a) methods of dealing with the emotionally disturbed, (b) methods of dealing with learning problems, (c) diagnosis of learning abilities, (d) methods of dealing with the mildly retarded, (e) the use of media and instructional equipment in the classroom, (f) the supervision of a classroom aide, (g) involvement in school-community relations, and (h) conferences with parents. It is hoped that further follow-up study of school of education graduates will be undertaken in order to focus the preservice preparation program on the needs of the students. (HMD)

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What Teacher Wish They Had Been Taught: A Follow-[illegible]rudy of Graduates of The School of Education, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

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Problem

The fact that "Who should plan and evaluate programs of teacher education?" is not generally considered to be a controversial question is one of the biggest problems in teacher education. The unexamined, almost universal assumptions are that teacher education 1) occurs in colleges and universities, 2) provides college youth with the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in schools and 3) is planned and revised by faculty who know how to transform late adolescents into professional practitioners. These assumptions should no longer be tacit; they must be brought into a conscious dialogue which more accurately reflects their highly debatable nature.

This study derives from the questionable character of the third assumption that college faculty bear the sole or even the primary responsibility for designing teacher education programs. The time when college faculty could gain the cooperation of lower school personnel by simply explaining their regular programs or its latest revisions, is over. It is no longer feasible for college faculty to merely expect the wholehearted cooperation of docile, accepting school teachers who will agree to perform a panoply of teacher education duties above and beyond their regular teaching functions, simply as their "professional responsibilities."

But the new reality of a better organized, less compliant body of teachers is neither the only or the major reason for questioning the right of college faculty to be the primary architects of teacher education programs. There is also the fundamental issue of professional truth: "Which principles can really be applied in classrooms?" "Which skills do teachers actually use?" "Which theories actually account for and predict growth and development, learning, instruction,

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curriculum development, evaluation and change? In the most fundamental sense of "customer," classroom teachers are the consumers of teacher education programs since it is they who can best judge the validity, the usefulness and the relevance of what they have been taught.

The National Commission for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) believes that one of the five basic guidelines for determining quality in teacher education programs is the degree to which classroom practitioners have been directly involved, as genuine partners, in the development, offering and evaluation of teacher preparation programs. In order to implement this guideline a survey of [illegible] graduates was undertaken in 1972. This survey should be viewed as a first-step and as merely one source of data which should be added to the several other follow-up sources commonly tapped.

The current students, the recent graduates and the classroom practitioners are three distinct populations who provide different kinds of suggestions for changing teacher education programs. Ideally, college faculty should seek the collaboration of recent graduates who are now teaching (for at least one year) as the group which can make the most relevant suggestions for improvement. Further, that recent graduates who are current practitioners should be involved as equal colleagues in the revision and change of teacher education programs. The recent emphasis on involving college youth in determining their present programs would not result in the same quality of input; neither would the advice of graduates who are in non-teaching activities. This is not to negate or ignore the inputs of participating students or recent graduates in various non-teaching jobs, but to emphasize that our graduates who are now teaching practitioners need to be fully and continually represented in the process of revising our programs.

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Obviously, responding to a survey such as this does not approach the necessary degree of involvement: equal voting representation in college faculty committees would be more appropriate. The data which follow, therefore, merely portend the nature of some of the inputs which practitioners would make if we implemented the stated guidelines of the teacher education profession.

Sample

In fall, 1972 a questionnaire was mailed to one half of the graduates in the January, June and August, 1972 classes. This amounted to approximately five hundred (500) graduates, most of whom were in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction specializing in early childhood, elementary, pre and early adolescent and secondary education. A very few students (i.e., 1/2 of the graduates) from Physical Education and Exceptional Education were also sampled: these respondents categorized themselves by level, i.e., elementary or secondary. Three hundred sixty-two (362) or seventy-two percent (72%) of the graduates responded: two hundred seventy women (270) and ninety-two men (92).

Instrument

A questionnaire schedule of forty-four items was developed. Each item represented a kind of teacher knowledge: a principle or a skill of teaching. The questionnaire was structured to permit the respondents to answer each item twice: first, to indicate whether they believed a particular item of professional learning to be necessary for their effective performance: and second, to indicate whether they believe the particular item was taught to them as part of their professional preparation at UNL. In effect, respondents grouped the forty-four items into four categories:

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INCLUDED IN PRESERVICE EDUCATION-U'M

NECESSARY FOR TEACHING EFFECTIVENESS	YES	NO
YES	Items are necessary for classroom teachers and were in the program of preparation	Items are necessary for classroom teachers but were not in the program of preparation
NO	Items are not necessary for classroom teachers and were in the program of preservice preparation	Items are not necessary for classroom teachers and were not in the program of preservice preparation

The items of most interest to potential planners of our teacher education programs are those in Category C: items which respondents consider necessary for effective classroom teaching which were not adequately covered in their preservice education. Some consideration is also given to Category C: items covered in preservice but not considered necessary to practice.

Findings

Eight items were selected by over half of the respondents as necessary to their present functioning as teachers but were perceived as not adequately covered in their programs of preparation. Next to each of the items below is the percentage of respondents who felt that these competencies are necessary but were not adequately taught.

Table 1.

ITEMS RATED "NECESSARY FOR EFFECTIVE TEACHING"	PERCENT INDICATING ITEMS NOT COVERED IN PREPARATION
1. Methods of dealing with the emotionally disturbed	76.2

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Table I. (Cont.)

ITEMS RATED "NECESSARY FOR EFFECTIVE TEACHING"	PERCENT INDICATING ITEMS NOT COVERED IN PREPARATION
2. Methods of dealing with learning problems	72.5
3. Diagnosis of learning disabilities	72.0
4. Methods of dealing with the mildly retarded	61.5
5. Using media and instructional equipment in the classroom	59.8
6. Supervising a classroom aide	56.4
7. Involvement in school community relations	51.9
8. Conferencing with parents	50.7

If these eight needs perceived by practicing graduates are analyzed in terms of their program levels some interesting distinctions may be noted. For example, Table II indicates that "using media" is not as apparent on the pre and early adolescent program level as on the other levels. On the other hand, dealing with "learning disabilities," "learning problems," "mildly retarded" and "emotionally disturbed" is a universal need as perceived by a majority of respondents on all levels. (See Tables III., IV., V. and VI.) Similarly, "supervising an aide" is perceived by a majority of respondents on all levels (Table IX.). "Conferencing with parents" and "involvement in community," however, are needs which are more germane on some program levels but not on others. (See Tables VII. and VIII.)

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Table II. "USING MEDIA AND INSTRUCTIONAL EQUIPMENT IN THE CLASSROOM"

Program	Percent of Graduates Indicating Inadequate Coverage
Early Childhood	64.71
Secondary	62.50
Elementary	54.57
Pre and Early Adol.	40.00

Table III. "DIAGNOSIS OF LEARNING DISABILITIES"

Program	Percent of Graduates Indicating Inadequate Coverage
Pre and Early Adol.	80.00
Elementary	75.61
Secondary	71.43
Early Childhood	64.71

Table IV. "METHODS OF DEALING WITH LEARNING PROBLEMS"

Program	Percent of Graduates Indicating Inadequate Coverage
Pre and Early Adol.	80.00
Elementary	75.61
Secondary	72.11
Early Childhood	70.59

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Table V. "METHODS OF DEALING WITH MILDLY RETARDED"

Program	Percent of Graduates Indicating Inadequate Coverage
Pre and Early Adol.	80.00
Early Childhood	62.75
Secondary	61.00
Elementary	61.79

Table VI. "METHODS OF DEALING WITH THE EMOTIONALLY DISTURBED"

Program	Percent of Graduates Indicating Inadequate Coverage
Early Childhood	84.31
Elementary	80.49
Pre and Early Adol.	80.00
Secondary	72.11

Table VII. "CONFERENCING WITH PARENTS"

Program	Percent of Graduates Indicating Inadequate Coverage
Secondary	58.50
Elementary	52.03
Early Childhood	33.33
Pre and Early Adol.	20.00

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Table VIII. "INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOL COMMUNITY RELATIONS"

Program	Percent of Graduates Indicating Inadequate Coverage
Pre and Early Adol.	60.00
Secondary	55.78
Elementary	45.53
Early Childhood	43.14

Table IX. "SUPERVISING A CLASSROOM AIDE"

Program	Percent of Graduates Indicating Inadequate Coverage
Pre and Early Adol.	80.00
Early Childhood	64.71
Elementary	57.72
Secondary	51.70

One of the questions that interested us was one of sex: Do male and female graduates perceive different competencies as necessary? While both sexes agree that these eight items are necessary to their practice and were missing from their preparation, men and women respond with some important differences. An examination of Table X. indicates that the differences in Items 2, 3, 4, 7 and 8 are not significant. However, the differences in the male and female responses to Items 1, 5 and 6 are significant. On these three

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items (i.e., methods of dealing with the emotionally disturbed; using instructional equipment and media; and supervising an aide), the proportion of women who perceive these needs as necessary but not covered in their programs of preparation is significantly greater than those of the men. While both men and women seem to agree that these eight items are "needs" for preservice programs, therefore, there are real differences between men's and women's perceptions.

Table X. PERCENTAGE OF MEN AND WOMEN RATING ITEMS OF TEACHER EDUCATION AS NECESSARY FOR EFFECTIVE TEACHING BUT NOT COVERED IN THEIR PRESERVICE PREPARATION

ITEMS	MEN	WOMEN
1. Methods of dealing with emotionally disturbed	65.91	80.08*
2. Methods of dealing with learning problems	72.73	72.41
3. Diagnosis of learning disabilities	75.00	70.08
4. Methods of dealing with mildly retarded	62.50	61.30
5. Using instructional media and equipment	51.14	62.45**
6. Supervising a classroom aide	47.73	59.39***
7. Involvement in school community relations	47.73	51.72
8. Conferencing with parents	55.68	40.04

* Significant at .01 level.

** Significant at .05 level.

*** Significant at .05 level.

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Thus far, the analysis has dealt with eight items which a majority of respondents considered necessary for effective teaching and for which they felt unprepared. There were no items which a majority of respondents designated as being both necessary and covered in their preservice preparation.

It is also of interest to summarize Category C in our paradigm; i.e., those competencies which respondents believe were taught to them in their preservice preparation but which they do not regard as necessary for effective teaching. All items which one fifth or more respondents (i.e., approximately seventy-two or more), regarded as taught but unnecessary are summarized in Table XI. CONTENT REGARDED AS TAUGHT IN PRESERVICE PROGRAMS BUT NOT NECESSARY TO EFFECTIVE CLASSROOM TEACHING

Item	Percent of Respondents
1. Writing lesson plans	30.6
2. Making assignments	26.1
3. Principles of learning	25.5
4.5 Communicating clear directions	24.6
4.5 Working with other teachers	24.6
6. Goals of the school curriculum	24.1
7.5 Organizing daily classroom activities	23.8
7.5 Asking good questions	23.8
9. Using behavioral objectives	23.2
10. Evaluating my own instruction	22.1
11.5 Knowledge of current research on teaching	21.8
11.5 Establishing rapport with students	21.8
13.5 Sociological backgrounds of pupils	21.2
13.5 Personal understanding of my own needs and goals	21.2

Table XI. (Continued)

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Item	Percent of Respondents
15. Marking report cards	21.0
16.5 Knowledge of subject matter to be taught	20.7
16.5 Getting along with administrators	20.7
18. Measurement and evaluation of student progress	20.4
19. Securing sufficient materials	20.1

Conclusions

1. UWM graduates now teaching on all levels believe they need some competencies which their programs did not provide them: working with "exceptional" children; using equipment and media and supervising aides.
2. UWM graduates now teaching on elementary and secondary levels perceive their preparation for conferencing with parents as inadequate.
3. UWM graduates now teaching on pre and early adolescent and on secondary levels perceive their preparation for involvement in the community as inadequate.
4. The needs of men and women preparing to teach may be different. While both groups need more preparation in the eight specific competencies noted, women perceive themselves as needing more help with media and equipment; supervising an aide; and dealing with the emotionally disturbed. Men perceive themselves in need of more skills at conferencing with parents.

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5. A substantial minority, from 1/5 to 1/4 of the respondents, seem to have a nihilistic view of effective classroom teaching. These respondents regard knowledge of subject matter; self-understanding; positive human relations with other teachers and administrators; knowledge of learning, pedagogy or curriculum; understanding of pupils' backgrounds and numerous other items as having been taught in their preservice programs but not necessary to effective teaching.

Implications

All students probably need more coursework and direct experience at dealing with the mildly retarded and disturbed younsters they will encounter in regular classrooms. Some joint planning between Exceptional Education and Curriculum and Instruction is clearly indicated.

The differences between future male and female teachers are differences in degree not kind. At the same time, selected program emphases for the sexes may be warranted.

Community involvement skills are different from parent conferencing skills. Both of these competencies might receive greater emphasis in selected program levels.

The use of media and equipment remains an across-the-board need, as perceived by practicing graduates.

Finally, while it is vital and urgent that we begin to involve our graduate classroom teachers, as colleagues in future planning, there is a real safeguard which must be taken. A substantial minority of these graduates may have bizarre or irrational notions of teacher effectiveness.

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These data are from graduates who completed programs three or more years ago. Since there has been substantial revision of many programs in the last few years (elementary and some specializations in secondary), it would be prudent to initiate another follow-up study before making any important revisions based entirely on this survey.